

COUNCIL

7 OCTOBER 2021

REPORT ON OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ACTIVITY

Report from: Neil Davies, Chief Executive
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Summary

This report provides a summary of the work of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees since the last report to Council on 22 July 2021.

1. Budget and policy framework

1.1. The Council's Constitution provides for the activities of Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committees to be reported to Council meetings. The following is a high-level summary of business conducted. For further detail please refer to the minutes of each Committee which are published on the Council's website using the web links under each section.

2. Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 5 August 2021

2.1. Member's Item: Russell House

Outcome:

The Committee noted the report and Director's comments and recommended the appropriate authorities (as determined by lead officers) to carry out full analysis of Russell House to determine if it is an appropriate location for a Foyer Project.

2.2. Medway Covid-19 Recovery

Outcome:

The Committee noted the report and thanked education staff for their hard work in supporting children and young people during the pandemic in challenging circumstances.

2.3. Medway Youth Council - Annual Report

Outcome:

The Committee noted the Medway Youth Council report, Covid: The Effect on Youth, as set out at Appendix 1 to the report, and the comments from the Director of People – Children and Adults Services and recommended the report be presented to full Council for its consideration.

2.4. Kent and Medway Suicide Prevention Strategy for Children and Young People

Outcome:

The Committee recommended Cabinet to approve the Kent and Medway Children and Young People Suicide Prevention Strategy on a page, as set out in section 4 of the report.

2.5. Proposal to amend the current payment scheme for Medway Local Authority Foster Carers

Outcome:

The Committee noted the report.

2.6. Progress report - Children's Services Improvement

Outcome:

The Committee noted the report.

2.7. Work Programme

Outcome:

The Committee agreed the work programme as set out at Appendix 1 to the report, including the changes outlined in italics.

3. Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 12 August 2021

3.1. Petitions

Outcome:

The Committee:

- a) thanked the lead petitioner for attending the meeting and addressing the Committee on his petition and noted the various contributions put forward.
- b) noted the petition responses and appropriate officer action in paragraphs 3 and 4 of the report.

3.2. Attendance by the Portfolio Holder for Front Line Services

Outcome:

The Committee thanked the Portfolio Holder for attending the meeting and answering questions and:

- a) noted that the Portfolio Holder will obtain information requested from Volker Highways as to whether it has any specific programmes aimed at encouraging individuals from disadvantaged groups of the community and in particular females to help them enter the industry.
- b) noted that the Portfolio Holder has offered to further investigate the street lighting concerns identified by a Member at the meeting.
- c) noted that the Portfolio Holder will refer to the Street Works team the issue of prompt removal of cones when road works have been completed.
- d) noted that the Portfolio Holder will convey the Committee's appreciation to staff within the Waste team who have continued to work tirelessly throughout the Covid-19 pandemic to collect increased volumes of waste and re-cycling.
- e) noted that the Portfolio Holder will discuss with the Waste team the concerns expressed that in some areas, Medway Norse street collection bags were left at the roadside and this encouraged others to add further bags to the pile containing household waste.
- f) noted that a report detailing the final destination of Medway's waste would be circulated when received.
- g) noted that the Portfolio Holder has offered to investigate improved communication as to recyclable materials.
- h) noted that further information would be supplied following the review of the frequency of the pre-booking system at Household Waste and Recycling Centres.
- i) noted that the Portfolio Holder has offered to investigate areas where street cleansing could be improved if areas were notified to him.

3.3. Work Programme

Outcome:

The Committee:

- a) requested whether it was feasible for the Four Elms Hill Air Quality Management Area Action Plan to be submitted to the Committee earlier than June 2022.
- b) requested that the report on the Potential for increasing use of the River also include reference to the Kingsnorth Jetty.

4. Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 17 August 2021

4.1. Transforming mental health services across Kent and Medway - Eradicating Dormitory Wards

Outcome:

The Committee agreed to:

- a) note the updates on the programme and consultation timelines provided in this report and, as a result, agree that the 12 October meeting of the Committee be moved to either 26 or 28 October.
- b) note the information provided in relation to the integrated impact assessment, and request that proposals be submitted to the next meeting on how to reduce the impact of increased travel times for patients and visitors.
- c) accept the invitation for a visit during the consultation period.
- d) continue to work with the CCG during the consultation and request that the 1 November date for providing a response and recommendations to the CCG on its consultation on the proposed closure of Ruby Ward be changed to allow time for a response to the proposals to be submitted.

4.2. Medway Community Healthcare Operational Performance Briefing

Outcome:

The Committee agreed to note the report.

4.3. Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust Update

Outcome:

The Committee agreed to:

- a) note the report.
- b) agree for themed integrated reports about mental health to be brought for information and discussion to this Committee over the next 12 months along with visits to local services outside of the Committee.
- c) agree that eating disorders for adults, children and young people mental health and transition will be the next themed scrutiny report brought to this committee via the Mental Health Learning Disability and Autism Improvement Board.

4.4. Kent and Medway Suicide Prevention Strategy for Adults

Outcome:

The Committee agreed to recommend that Cabinet approve the Kent and Medway Adult Suicide Prevention Strategy on a page, as set out in section 4 of the report.

4.5. Council Plan Performance Monitoring and Risk Register Review Quarter 4 2020/21

Outcome:

The Committee agreed to note the Quarter 4 2020/21 performance against the measures used to monitor progress against the Council's priorities, and to also note the amended Strategic Risk Register as set out in Appendix 2 to the report.

4.6. Work Programme

Outcome:

The Committee:

- a) agreed the changes to the work programme as set out in paragraph 2.2;
- b) requested a briefing note on the role of the Primary Care Networks in Medway;
- c) agreed that a proposal to add to the work programme the issue of the rise in deaths from alcohol and substance abuse be discussed at the next agenda planning meeting.

5. Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 19 August 2021

5.1. Universal Credit and Welfare Reforms - Annual Progress Report

Outcome:

The Committee:

- a) noted the work referenced in the report and was assured that the Member Task Group's recommendations are embedded in the Council's policies, practices and contracts and those of its partners; and
- b) thanked the staff of the DWP and the Council's Housing and Finance teams for their work during the Covid pandemic.

5.2. Statement of Gambling Policy 2022 - 2025

Outcome:

The Committee:

- a) noted the responses to the consultation and officers' proposed amendments to the policy document as set out in paragraph 3 of the report;

- b) commented on the draft policy document attached at Appendix 1 to the report, including officers' proposed amendments as set out in paragraph 3 of the report; and
- c) proposed no further amendments to the draft policy document prior to its consideration by Cabinet and recommendation to Full Council for approval.

5.3. Covid-19 Recovery

Outcome:

The Committee noted the overall approach set out in the report and the proposal to mainstream this activity into Business as Usual.

5.4. Medway Norse Update

Outcome:

The Committee noted the contents of the report and its Appendix.

5.5. Revenue and Capital Budget Outturn 2020/21

Outcome:

The Committee noted the 2020/21 revenue and capital outturn position.

5.6. Council Plan Performance Monitoring and Risk Register Review, Quarter 4 2020/21

Outcome:

The Committee:

- a) considered the Q4 2020/21 performance against the measures used to monitor progress against the Council's priorities and noted the amended strategic risk register as set out in Appendix 4 of the report; and
- b) was informed that work to determine the level of risk of another pandemic was being undertaken and that the outcome of this work would be reported to a future meeting.

5.7. Work Programme

Outcome:

The Committee:

- a) agreed the Committee's work programme (Appendix 1 to the report);

- b) noted the work programmes of the other overview and scrutiny committees (Appendix 2 to the report); and
- c) proposed that the overview and scrutiny process should include consideration of the Local Plan, preferably after the public consultation stage.

6. Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 30 September 2021

- 6.1. The following reports were due to be considered by the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 30 September 2021 and are listed here to enable the Council to discuss any issues arising at this meeting as the minutes are not yet available:
- 6.2. Actions to reduce domestic abuse harms for children in Medway
- 6.3. Complaints and Compliments Annual Report 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021
- 6.4. Annual Fostering Report
- 6.5. High Needs Block Recovery Plan
- 6.6. Medway Council Education Strategic Framework
- 6.7. Council Plan Performance Monitoring and Risk Register Review Quarter 1 2021/22
- 6.8. Work programme

7. Recommendation

- 7.1. It is recommended that Council notes the report in relation to Overview and Scrutiny activity.

Contact for further details

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Appendices

None

Background papers

[Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee –](#)

[5 August 2021](#)

<https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=378&MId=5239&Ver=4>

[Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee -](#)

[12 August 2021](#)

<https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=437&MId=5061&Ver=4>

[Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee –](#)

[17 August 2021](#)

<https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=131&MId=5063&Ver=4>

[Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 19 August 2021](#)

<https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=123&MId=5065>

[Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee –](#)

[30 September 2021](#)

<https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=378&MId=5079>